are of importance to the public, have been identified. The imports of these items are constantly monitored by a Standing Group headed by the Commerce Secretary which suggests appropriate measures to regulate the imports. Further, imports of agricultural products like wheat, rice, maize, other coarse cereals, copra and coconut oil are allowed only through the State Trading Enterprises.

Death Compensation for Gujarat Earthquake

†4317. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA : will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that compensation is not being paid for the persons who died of panic during earthquake in Gujarat, though their children have become orphans;

(b) if so, whether Government would issue directions to the State Government to locate and compensate them; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) There is provision for payment of ex-gratia amounts to the families of the persons who die as a result of natural calamities. Such payments are not admissible where death is caused by other reasons. The ultimate judgement lies with the State Government concerned and the Central Government is not authorized under the scheme of assistance in natural calamities to issue directions in the matter.

Feed Stock costs in Fertilizer Industry

4318. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the feed stock costs make fertilizer industry uncompetitive with other countries; and

(b) if so, what steps the Ministry has taken to help the industry so that it becomes competitive in the international market ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) While the Indian Fertilizer Industry has achieved internationally competitive energy

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.